



In the 1930s it was possible to make a living as a freelance magazine cartoonist; however, it was like doing a trapeze act without a net. Cartoonists who didn't live near New York and Chicago -- the two major centers for scores of national magazines -- had to rely on the postal service to deliver their work. They also had to compete with other cartoonists who could actually meet with magazine cartoonist on weekly "look days." On "look days," cartoonists could not only talk to magazine editors but also visit with other cartoonists and stay informed about news that affected their profession. Eldon Dedini, a farm boy living in a remote rural area of California, didn't have these options. His cartoon roughs, sketched on sheets of ordinary typewriter paper, put in an envelope and dropped in a mailbox, had to speak for him.

He was born to draw funny pictures

As a child Dedini pored over comic books and newspaper "funnies." Before he reached high school he had set his mind on a career in comic art. His mother, an elementary teacher, bound together years of Sunday comics for him to study. He trained himself to draw by emulating the art in those bound comics and by reading books on drawing. He took a "How to Draw" mail course which included the basics of assembling batches of rough cartoon and sending them to magazine publishers for approval. Dedini sketched cartoon ideas

while riding the bus to junior college 100 miles up and down the Salinas Valley every day, and began sending them out.

At first the rejection slips from the Saturday Evening Post, Look, Ladies Home Journal, and other magazines piled up. But finally, while studying art and history as a college freshman, he broke into the select ranks of Esquire Magazine cartoonists. This was an astonishing accomplishment for a 19-year-old who still lived on a farm thousands of miles from his cartoon editor.

Dedini's wit and drawing were beginning to make an impact.

From there, his career as a humorous artist slowly built. He moved to Los Angeles to attend Chouinard Art Institute, where he developed his sense of composition, color, and technique. His innate sense of humor needed no polishing.

He went on to work for Universal Studios and then for Walt Disney, while still submitting successful cartoons and gags to Esquire. In 1946 Esquire's editor offered to double his Disney salary and put him on staff (while remaining in California) to draw cartoons and produce 100 gags a month for other Esquire cartoonists. Dedini jumped at the chance, and said good-bye to a "regular" job.

In 1950 the Esquire editor realized that Dedini's full potential was barely being tapped, and arranged for the cartoonist to submit work to the editors of The New Yorker Magazine. This was a major turning point. The New Yorker editors welcomed and encouraged Dedini's graphic originality.

In 1954 a young man named Hugh Hefner took the old idea that "beautiful babes help sell magazines" to a higher level, creating Playboy magazine. Hefner was a cartoonist, so the magazine included sophisticated, handsomely executed cartoons alongside substantive articles by recognized writers. "Hef" had been a copyboy at Esquire and admired Dedini's work. For three years he kept swinging the trapeze to Dedini, inviting the cartoonist to join his contributors and offering to raise the pay each time. Finally, in 1959, with no objections from his other editors, Dedini grabbed the bar. His association with Playboy would last for the next 45 years.

Dedini's work helped take Playboy's image beyond that of a "men's magazine" and into sophisticated satire covering the bar and party scene, the corporate world, international politics, jazz, mythology, and even Japanese art.

In 1959, cartoonist Eldon Dedini began working for Playboy magazine -- an association that would last 45 years. Dedini's cartoons became almost synonymous with the magazine because of their unique look and sophisticated humor.

Unlike almost all other cartoonists, Dedini thought in color rather than in line when he created a cartoon. Instead of thinking of color as just something added to a drawing, he clearly saw his cartoons as paintings with volume and depth. Although his line work was exceptional, his cartooning process didn't depend on linear draftsmanship. His principal color medium was

watercolor. He handled its challenges with great skill and obvious joy.

Dedini began his cartoons by making a quick, painterly rough drawing. Then he did the whole drawing again in chiaroscuro (the rendering of dark and light objects) using charcoal and wash. After this middle step, he did a final, detailed drawing and finished it in full color.

His cartoons encompassed a wide range of subjects, from religion to sex and everything in between. His interests included food, wine, people, humor, history, travel, family, sex, beautiful women and the outdoors. All these interests are reflected in Dedini's cartoons. In scenes where satyrs romp with nymphs, the backgrounds could stand on their own as gorgeous nature studies. Voluptuous women draped with furs climb into perfectly detailed sports cars parked in brooding cityscapes. In a cartoon featuring Noah's Ark, the ark and all the animals are brilliantly painted, and the weather -- a stormy sky with just a few raindrops beginning to pelt down -- is as well-rendered as a museum-quality painting.

→ Continued on Back Porch page 23



A solid dark blue five-pointed star is positioned to the left of the text. The text "Blue Star Museums" is written in a dark blue, serif font. "Blue Star" is on the top line and "Museums" is on the bottom line, both right-aligned with the star.

Blue Star Museums

A partnership among Blue Star Families,
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arts.gov/bluestarmuseums

Artist is hooked on nature's reclaims



Watercolor is said to be an addictive type of painting. The color, texture and material selected in the beginning can lead down a very unpredictable path. The constant blending, building, editing, tearing down and rebuilding again delivers a sense of achievement to these masters, however, by taming the uncontrollable nature of the medium.

David Poxon is an international achiever in the world of professional watercolor. Coming back to his love of watercolor painting after a successful career in the music industry, it did not take long for his name to become widely recognized. Winning the 2008 Still Life prize at the *Royal Institute of Painters in Watercolors*, doors opened and he was accepted into the Royal Institute in 2010.

→

Growing up in the West Midlands where sights and sounds were shadowed by mills and foundries, a surreal image of life's struggles formed in David's mind. His work follows this same path in portraying the beauty of life's struggles to succeed, years of hope and defeat and the will to never give up. Real life is not blue skies and happiness but a struggle that leaves many with frayed edges and worn surfaces.

"The common place or the overlooked become my subject material as nature slowly reclaims that which man has abandoned or cast aside, creating a fragile beauty which is ever-changing," shares Poxon regarding his watercolors.

It is amazing how Poxon's audience is able to relate to the reality of a world that was once shoved under the carpet in disgust. Eyes have been opened and no longer is society ignoring the hard work and pain that is thrust upon us but instead, embracing with a new desire to understand and appreciate the imperfections of life. One of David's latest exhibitions was held at the *Shanghai Biennial* by invitation of the Chinese Government. A solo exhibition followed in the same venue.

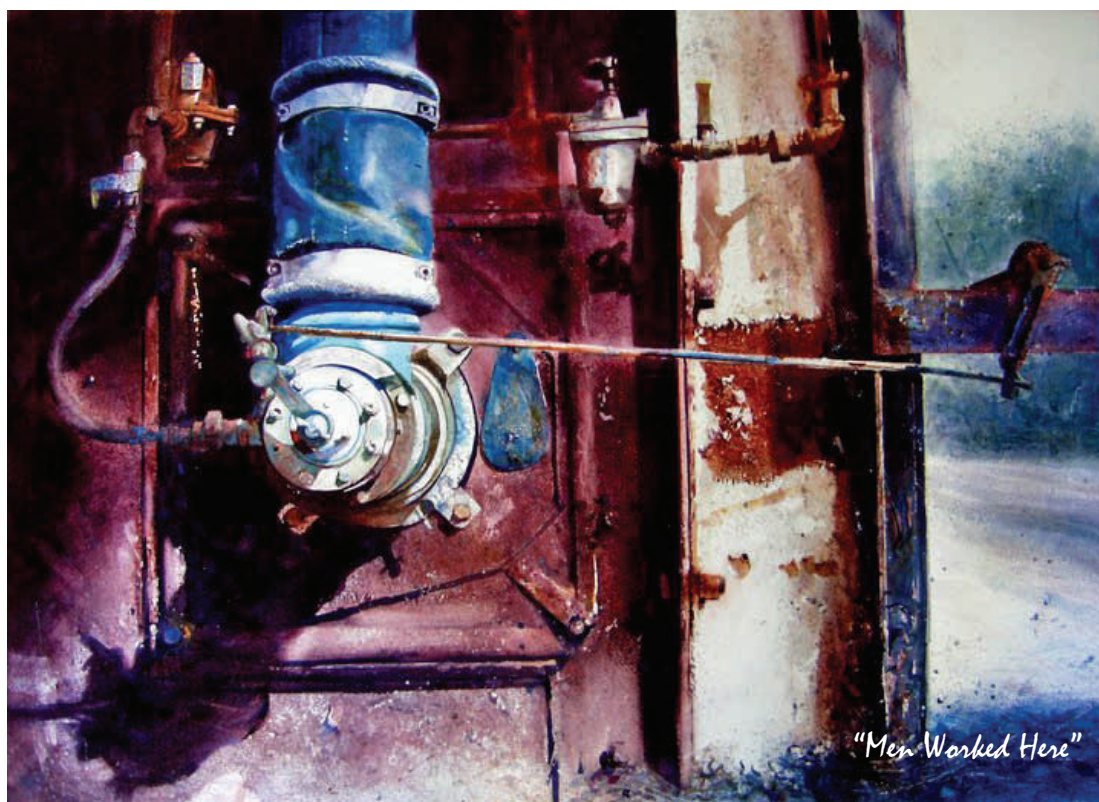
Poxon has long recognized the work of achieved artists within the British RI, especially those with the same contemporary views of realism in watercolor painting. It only seemed natural to create a show with those like-minded, passionate artists with skills that are second to none.

2012 kicks off the beginning of international exhibitions where David along with Angus McEwan RSW ARWS, Denis Ryan ARWS and Sandra Walker RI will present an



incredible vision of watercolor at its finest. "Art of the Real" is a first in delivering the individual unique talents of award winning and distinguished artists as a consonance of one in visualizing and constructing one theme. As a foursome, these artists have created a new path for others to follow in sharing the humbling gift of unity and skill in delivering the perception of life as it is.

You will not want to miss the fragile beauty that only these acclaimed watercolor artists can bring and for more continued updates, see www.davidpoxon.co.uk. for the latest on where to find scheduled shows and previews of the event.



Black & White

My Grandpa used to tell me his “I remember when” stories and I would think that he was stone cold crazy but I would sit there, smile and nod.

“Why, I used to walk a mile to the one room schoolhouse across the creek, study all day, turn around and walk that same mile back home,” Grandpa would say.

“And there wouldn’t be any rest when I got home, neither. Animals to tend to, farming to do . . .” he would go on and on.

I kept reminding myself that I would never get old, never bore my grandkids to tears with “I remember when” stories, never act the fool, like Grandpa. Did anyone actually believe those stories? What a crock!

So here I am, remembering stories of my own, just like I promised myself I wouldn’t, boring my grandkids to death and watching their sheepish smiles and their eyes roll.

“No way, Grandma,” they taunt me when I tell them once again about the day we brought home our first black and white television set. Now we could bring other lives right into our living room!

Westerns like *Rawhide*, *Gunsmoke*, *Wagon Train*, *Bonanza* with Little Joe and Hoss, and real time heroes like *Superman* with Jimmy and Lois Lane, including animals that were smart! *Rin Tin Tin* and *Lassie* always saved Timmy from trouble and just in the nick of time.

Then there were the perfect TV parents who put mine to shame like Ward and June, Rob and Laura and Donna Reed. I always wondered why my Mom couldn’t look all dressed up like them, twenty-four hours a day.

And the comedies! You don’t see shows like that nowadays. *Dennis the Menace*, *I Love Lucy*, *Leave it to Beaver* and *The Real McCoys*. That’s when fun was clean, simple people with simple lives and the good guys always won the fights.

Then you wrap up the evening with *David and Chet*, fold down the rabbit ears and feel good about a night of real entertainment.

Everyone knew right from wrong, no cursing or breaking vows; a promise made was a promise kept. Everything felt so good, so right. I’d trade all the channels on my cable if I could just turn back the clock tonight to black and white: The National Anthem playing right before the station signs off.

“Grandma? Grandma? Can we go now?” scream my grandsons. I look at them and smile, just like Grandpa used to smile at me because now I know what he was grinning about.

“Sure kids, let’s go,” I say.

But under my breath I say, “Things really did look better in black and white.”



By Kate Garton



Attention: Heads up • Eyes right

We've all seen the ceramic mugs depicting a celebrity, clown or an oriental lady's face and upper bosom. Created and distributed from the late 1940s through the early 1970s, this novel ceramic art form originated in Japan.



Many of these head vases were made by the National Potteries Company and they have their stamp on the bottom of the piece. Their initial intended use were for florists, however because they were so small, they could not get enough flowers in them for profitability; thusly, they ended up on the storage shelves, collecting dust.



As an artist and teacher, I enjoy searching antique shops and flea markets to add to my collection. I remember my Mother receiving flowers in these containers when I was a young girl. Today, I use the small containers to store my paintbrushes.

The most popular of the estimated ten thousand different varieties are the ladies adorning fancy hats, pearl necklaces and dangling earrings.

Realistic facial expressions easily make past beauties recognizable like Marilyn Monroe, Lucille Ball and Jackie O, who are a few of the sought after pieces, ranging from \$150 to \$1000.

If you are interested in joining this growing group of "Head Hunters," some excellent resources are the book,

"The Encyclopedia of Head Vases" by Kathleen Cole and Maddy Gordon's Head Hunters newsletter.

Both will enhance your knowledge on this collector's item and its history.

Happy hunting!

By Janet Ravas



Handel Concerti grossi Op.6
I Musici
Newton Classics 8802030 (3 CDs)

Classic performances from yesteryear (1987 and 1989), when scholarship was on the brink of finally disposing, they thought, with modern instrument recordings. The



music making is sumptuous, but it's more a matter of spirit and generosity than of steel strings versus gut. The recording is one of the first hints that digital sound could hint

at vinyl's analogue bloom. Richard Lawrence's program notes are rich themselves, with a kind of pirate swagger. I Musici's Corelli Op. 6, their greatest monument, must certainly be around the corner.

Tertis Viola Ensemble: Concerto, Fantasy, Blues
Oehms Classics OC 788 (50:20)

Highlighting an imaginative program, 13 minutes of Telemann played by four superb young violists from the Munich Philharmonic unmistakably resonate with music which to

Telemann himself must have already seemed like early music. This is most marked in two, transfiguring slow movements of twisted, William Byrd-like beauty. The timbres and harmonic interplay are focused inward



deep into the musical bosom of a family or group of friends. The florid simplicity of Telemann's writing, and his way with a pretty melody, allows each of the instruments plenty of opportunities to shine. The brief York Bowen has moments of memorable, gentle beauty in a 1930s English renaissance kind of way, Bartok, as always, is heartbreaking and beautiful.

Vivaldi Concerti per flauto "Giorno e Notte"
Conrad Steinmann, Chiara Bianchini, David Courvoisier, Stefanie Pister, Gaetano Nasillo, Michael Chanu, Karl-Ernest Schroeder, and Joerg-Andreas Boetticher
Divox Antiqua 70804

This revolutionary recording from 2001 has been reissued in hybrid SAC format so that non-luddites with the proper setup can have even a more transforming experience than before. Also, most noticeably in SACD mode, you can hear what Sol Babitz meant by the hoped-for frisson of imprecision. Commenting on the instrumental choices faced by modern performers, Steinmann's elaborate liner essay, which takes an approach similar to Babitz but with vastly different resources,

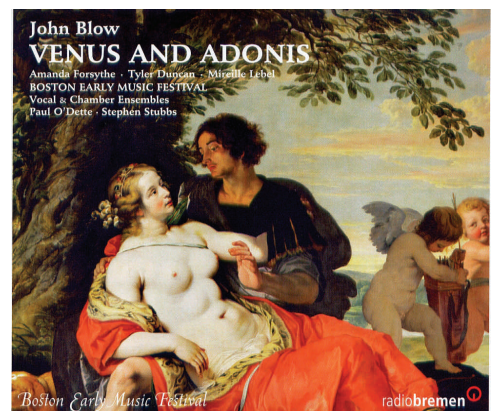


concludes with a reflection on the title he chose for the recital: "Just like flutes, shadows become shorter as the morning progresses and, like the flutes, become longer after the siesta and into the night, where they lose themselves in sleep and dreams." Just another stunning reminder of Vivaldi's immense stature.

John Blow (1649-1708) Venus and Adonis
Boston Early Music Festival, Paul O'Dette, Stephen Stubbs
CPO 777614 (65:22)

CPO has garnered three Grammy nominations with the Boston Early Music Festival and this could finally be a winner. For those who don't

remember **Venus and Adonis**, it is considered to be the earliest



surviving English opera. It's the usual air-head mythic tragedy: Venus falls in love with Adonis after being struck by Cupid's errant arrow, then encourages him to hunt the wild boar that eventually gores him to death. The music is full of sighs, complaints, hunting horns, choruses and dogs, all in some sense of naïve harmony with each other. The performance is full of North American confidence and enthusiasm backed up by expert, earnest singing and acting, a crack pit band ready at the drop of a baton to pick up and do battle with a percussion instrument or two, and a fine obedient chorus. Beautiful packaging, too: Slip case, fat booklet with lots of production photos. The works. Blow fans everywhere will be delighted.

**William Byrd (died 1623) Complete Consort Music
Phantasm
Linn CKD 372 (79:59)**

80 minutes of pure joy--if you can handle the rich polyphonic blends of Byrd (and attendant melancholy) as it's played by one of the most exciting viol consorts active on the world scene today. The recording is an early music audiophile's tour de force, recorded at Merton College Chapel, Oxford. The sound on a conventional system is sleek and detailed; in SACD the colors glow in Byrd's dark night. Laurence Dreyfus' liner notes are a treatise and a treatise (complete with impressive tables) in themselves. "Our recording ... attempts a continuous flow between the contrasting musical genres. In so doing, we weave in and out of an Elizabethan tableau where the daily, even bawdy, pleasures of dance and popular song are calmed by quiet moments of rapt meditation in the devotional hymn settings and elevated with the more ecstatic confessions of the In Nomines ... What's remarkable is that the genre of each piece is often unrecognizable from its opening gesture, making the journey through Byrd's consorts a tantalizing voyage of discovery."



Laurence Vittes is a 40-year veteran as a music and performing arts critic, providing his expertise to the Art-to-Art Palette Journal, including the Gramophone, Hollywood Reporter, Strings, HuffPost Arts, Music Web International and Audiophile Audition. In addition, he co-hosts with Alexey Steele the Classical Underground concerts in Torrance, California, 20 miles south of Walt Disney Concert Hall.

A childhood memory of love and lols

Records in print, whether they be books, journals, photographs or paintings are visual aids by which the eye and the heart join in a recollection of a reality that was and is, uniting them as one, granting them an instant snapshot of a once; somewhat in an outer body experience, yet in person to those physically unreachable places now.

Robert Frost's poem, "*The Road Not Taken*" – the last three lines: "Two roads diverged in a wood, and I, I took the one less traveled by, And that has made all the difference," best describes what I found to be a huge, gigantic time in my youth that engulfed my living and the book, "*The Man Behind the Nose: Assassins, Astronauts, Cannibals, and Other Stupendous Tales*" by Larry "Bozo" Harmon with Thomas Scott McKenzie has given me that resurgence to witness those untouchable events, no different than in the movie, "*Way We Were*" as well as that little 'gathering' in Woodstock, New York in the 60s, including those five young men, who's song, "*I Want to Hold Your Hand*" is also a reminder what Bozo did for the boy back then, filling him with so much happiness and hours and hours of lols.

In this review, part of me struggles to singular out any one part in the book that would encourage the millions, who were also entertained by Bozo the Clown, to not to hesitate to purchase and take a reading journey. The fact is, the whole book is a Van Gogh in print. As I read this historical document, it undoubtedly proved to be also a testament to my good times with Bozo; in fact, his tales opened up every vein in my memory to all of my favorite times spent with him.

There is another part about "*The Man Behind the Nose: Assassins, Astronauts, Cannibals, and Other Stupendous Tales*" -- the book's design has rightfully achieved a 'Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts' honor as an extraordinary visual accreditation that soars with immortality that exhibits a man's life with the same richness as the written content.

In my childhood years, I cannot recall what I wanted out of life, but in it, I had to have that funny-looking man with big hair, ears and that red nose. However today, Larry's book serves me as a reminder, when it comes to making things work, including what it takes to put one's own stamp of approval on it -- working in a tireless never ending giving up mode to reach an accord with what is right and wrong -- no one walks alone because his life story, as I can see it, can also be summed up by **Robert Kirby** of the *Utah County Journal*: "The mark of a true professional is giving more than you get." My treasure chest is still full.

Review by Ben Rayman

Prisons

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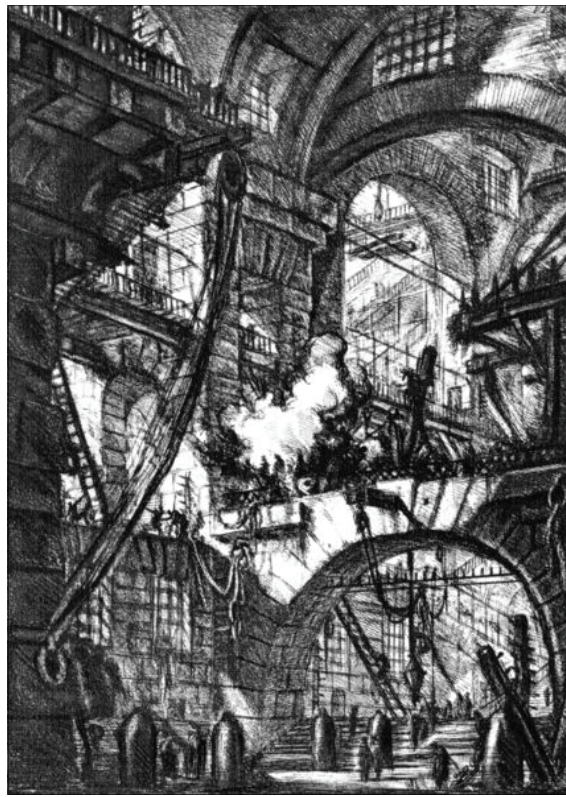
what to do with these oddities.)

The remains of ancient Rome truly excited Piranesi. He had a knack for accurately visualizing the missing parts of deteriorating ancient structures. This, combined with his masterful skills in etching and engraving, brought him fame for his etchings of both contemporary and ancient Rome. But Piranesi is best remembered for his amazing etchings of imaginary "prisons" -- the "Carceri d'Invenzione".

He began etching the Carceri in 1745. The first series consisted of 14 light, somewhat sketchy-looking etchings. The original prints were 16 x 21 inches. For the second publishing in 1761, he reworked all the etchings and two more were added. The second series of prints were darker, more detailed and more mysterious, as Piranesi became more passionate about showing the mood and complexity of his fantasized prisons.

Piranesi's imaginary prisons were vast, Gothic halls filled with strange engines and machinery. These prisons are a place for the imagination to wander. They could not possibly exist in real life -- they contain strange anomalies, including a staircase that exists on two planes simultaneously. Wheels, cables, levers, pulleys and catapults draw the viewer's eye around the picture, making us feel that we are groping our way up through a huge maze. Nothing is logical. We find a staircase and follow it upwards, only to find that it suddenly terminates in a drop-off and we must climb a rope; and eventually stairs, ropes, and pulleys are all lost in the vast gloom of the upper halls.

In most of these pictures, actual punishment is suggested rather than shown. A few prison guards -- or they might be prisoners doing forced labor -- are shown digging a



"The Smoking Fire" from the "Carceri" series.



"The Drawbridge" from the "Carceri" series.

grave in the middle of a prison. There are glimpses of torture -- a man being pulled on a rack, naked figures chained to posts; but high above them seems to be a musician playing the fiddle. Even higher, spectators are gathered on a walkway. It's impossible to tell who is who; are these people guards, prisoners, or visitors? Perhaps everyone in this place is a prisoner.

The most disquieting thing about the prisons Piranesi depicts is that they are totally pointless. The architecture is magnificent and awe-inspiring, obviously hundreds of people have labored to build these prisons, but nothing seems to have a real purpose. Even the punishments seem relaxed, almost as if the prisoners and the torturers are in mutual agreement. We get the impression that the prisons extend for hundreds of miles and this colossal pointlessness goes on indefinitely.

Ever since they were published in the 1700s, Piranesi's prison pictures have inspired writers, designers and architects. As early as 1760, a spectacular opera set copied one of Piranesi's prison spaces. Edgar Allen Poe was a huge fan of Piranesi's work, and the Carceri etchings inspired him to write "The Pit and the Pendulum." Elements of Piranesi's prisons appear in films from "Metropolis" to "Blade Runner" -- even the moving staircases at Hogwarts School in the Harry Potter movies were inspired by the "Carceri".

Piranesi himself felt that he was a failure. He dreamed of becoming what he said he was, a "Venetian architect," rather than a creator of souvenir pictures for travelers. It may be that his prison etchings are a reflection of his thoughts, showing that he felt trapped and punished by his reputation as a souvenir artist. But he did the prison etchings with such obvious enjoyment that perhaps they show that, in the end, Piranesi succumbed to a sort of pleasure in his own punishment.

Eldon Dedini

Continued from page 9

Dedini's art studies gave him an interest in the Old Masters, and it isn't surprising that the voluptuous women he drew for Playboy were sometimes referred to as "Rubenesque," after Peter Paul Rubens, the brilliant 17th century Flemish painter. The comparison involves not only Ruben's well-rounded women but also his brilliant use of color and the lively flow of his compositions and figures -- things that are also strongly apparent in Dedini's work.

In an interview, Dedini commented, "I think plump girls are humorous -- they're more apt to be in real life. You get a Vogue model and I don't think she'll ever be funny." Dedini's cartoon females are all built more like Sophia Loren and Marilyn Monroe than Twiggy or Jennifer Aniston.

Although Dedini was known for his bawdy Playboy cartoons, in his own relationships he was very conservative. He met his wife, painter Virginia Conroy, while they were both studying art in Los Angeles. Their marriage lasted more than 60 years.

Not all his work consisted of beautiful babes and topical humor. For nine years, his cartoons were the centerpiece of a campaign for Mann Packing Co.'s broccoli. A 2005 retrospective show on his career in his former home town of Salinas, California, was aptly called "From Babes to Broccoli." Dedini wasn't thrilled with the show's title, but as a professional humorist he said, "It's all right. It works."

Dedini's cartoon roughs were so well conceived and drawn that editors had little to edit. Lee Lorenz of The New Yorker magazine said of Dedini, "He was tough to edit because he didn't need much editing. I never asked him to redraw, which at The New Yorker is quite unusual."

Dedini himself downplayed the illustrative side of his art, saying millions of people can draw but a good

gag (the caption that distills the drawing's humor) is the most difficult part of cartooning.

"That's not true," Lorenz said. "While a million people can draw, very few can cartoon well. To be a cartoonist you have to be a stylist, and that's not easy to come by. It transcends any technique."

Eldon Dedini died of cancer at age 85 in January 2006. He was still meeting Playboy deadlines, and his work was appearing worldwide -- as it had for over 60 years.

By Kay Sluterbeck/AAPJ

Why Some People Think Duke Ellington Is a Member of the Royal Family.



KIDS DON'T GET ENOUGH ART THESE DAYS. So you can see why some of them might accidentally confuse a jazz legend named Duke with royalty named duke. But it's finally time to set the record straight.

Edward Kennedy "Duke" Ellington didn't rule over a small English estate. Instead he reigned supreme over jazz institutions like The Cotton Club. He ruffed powerfully on the piano, but it was the full orchestra that he considered his most compelling instrument. He introduced improvisation to his compositions — a process unheard of using a 15-piece orchestra. The result was a different approach to jazz that sparked a revolution and an evolution. His music spread across the world with songs like "Sophisticated Lady," "In a Sentimental Mood," and "Take the 'A' Train." His historical concert in 1953 at the Newport Jazz Festival has entered the lexicon of legendary live performances. There is no doubt about it, Ellington's brand of jazz has contributed significantly to the American songbook and to the lives of anyone who has ever tapped their foot to a beat.

Jazz is art, you dig? Art can really transform lives. In fact, the more art kids get, the smarter they become in subjects like math and science. And the more likely they'll become well-rounded, cool members of society. For Ten Simple Ways to get more art in kids' lives, visit AmericansForTheArts.org.

Give your kids a chance to succeed. Up their daily dose of art.



Royal dukes are squaresville. They have no rhythm. And they wear crowns.

A piano player. A composer. An orchestra leader. Duke Ellington reigned over a land called Jazz.

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